

AFRICAN UNION

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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL 1103RD MEETING 31 AUGUST 2022 ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM. 1103 (2022)

COMMUNIQUE

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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1103rd meeting held on 31 August 2022 regarding the updated briefing on the situation in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):

The Peace and Security Council.

Recalling the Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.815 (XXXV)] adopted by the Heads of State and Government during the 35th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held on 5 - 6 February 2022, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, welcoming the significant progress in the Great Lakes Region evidenced by the strengthening of bilateral and multilateral cooperation amongst the signatories of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF) Agreement for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region;

Referring to the Decision [Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.(XVI)1] adopted by the 16th Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union on Terrorism and Unconstitutional Changes of Government in Africa held on 28 May 2022, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on the latest developments on the common border between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Rwanda, and which mandated the Chair of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), in the framework of the principle of complementarity and subsidiarity, to mediate between the two parties and report on the diplomatic efforts;

Underscoring its previous decisions and pronouncements on the situation in the DRC and the Great Lakes Region, particularly Communiqués [PSC/PR/COMM.1078 (2022)1] adopted at its 1078th meeting held on 19 April 2022, which recognized the situation and the atrocities in Eastern DRC as terrorism and called the Commission to rapidly deploy Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (DDR)/Security Sector Reform (SSR) experts to the DRC, in line with the AU initiatives to silence the guns in Africa;

Noting the opening statement by H.E. Ambassador Jainaba Jagne, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Gambia and PSC Chairperson for August 2022 and the statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, AU Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security;

Taking note of the statements by H.E. Christophe Lutundula Apala Pen'Apala, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DRC; H.E. Tete Antonio, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Angola, ICGLR Chair; and H.E. Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Principal Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya and Special Envoy of H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta on the Nairobi Process; as well as H.E. Ambassador Hope Tumukunde Gasatura, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Rwanda to the AU;

Also taking note of the statements by H.E. Ambassador Willy Nyamitwe, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Burundi as the Chair of the East African Community (EAC), H.E. Bante Mangaral, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Commissioner of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and H.E. Yasir Mohammed, ICGLR Secretariat, as well as H.E. Bintou Keita, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO);

Reaffirming the unwavering commitment of the AU to respect the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the DRC, as well as the solidarity of the AU with the people and the Government of the DRC in their legitimate aspirations for peace, stability and socio-economic development; and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Expresses deep concern** about the prevailing insecurity in the Eastern DRC, especially in North Kivu and Ituri, perpetuated by the presence of armed and terrorist groups, and its attendant adverse impact on the population and the region; **reiterates its strong condemnation** on the atrocities committed by the ex-M23, as well as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Forces Democratiques de Liberation du

Rwanda (FDRL) and other armed and terrorist groups;

2. **Commends** the efforts being deployed by the EAC, ECCAS, ICGLR and SADC, including the deployment of the Burundian troops in the eastern DRC aimed at fostering peace in the region; and **welcomes** the adoption of the Roadmap on the Pacification Process in the Eastern Region of the Democratic Republic of Congo during the tripartite summit held on 6 July 2022, in Luanda, Angola; and **calls** for its implementation;

3. **Pays special tribute to** H.E. Joao Manuel Lourenco, President of the Republic of Angola and the Chair of ICGLR, for his tireless efforts in mediating the differences between the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, and **encourages** the President of Angola, in the spirit of African solutions to African problems, to spare no effort in promoting good neighbourliness between the two countries and regional peace, security and stability;

4. **Equally, pays special tribute** to the concerted efforts by the EAC Heads of State, under the auspices of H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, through the Nairobi Process, aimed at stabilizing the Eastern DRC and the region at large; and **in this regard, endorses** the outcomes of the 3rd Meeting of the EAC Heads of State held on 20 June 2022, to deploy a regional force to stabilize the security situation in the Eastern DRC and the Communique of the 22nd Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State held on 22 July 2022 in Arusha, Tanzania, under the auspices of H.E. Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi;

5. **Expresses appreciation** to H.E. Felix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo and H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, for their support and commitment towards the implementation of the Nairobi and Luanda processes;

6. **Underscores** the need to ensure synergy and alignment of the Nairobi and Luanda Peace Processes on the eastern DRC, to harmonize and coordinate all efforts for the stabilization of the DRC;

7. **Deplores** the continued attacks and crimes against civilians, especially women and children in gross violation of universal conventions, including International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law, and **calls for** all perpetrators to face the full might of the law and be brought to justice; **while emphasizing** the imperative of gender and youth empowerment mainstreaming in the diverse initiatives aimed at the restoration of peace and security in the Eastern DRC;

8. **Calls** for de-escalation of hate speeches in the region and **encourages** the concerned parties to prioritize dialogue and mediation as an amicable and peaceful means of resolving differences;

9. **Commends** MONUSCO and all Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) for their commitment to the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region; and **reaffirms** the significance of cooperation, coordination and complementarity of efforts between MONUSCO, Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), Burundi National Defence Force (FDN), Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) and the EAC Regional Force;

10. **Strongly condemns** the recent attacks against the MONUSCO, which resulted in casualties amongst peacekeepers and civilians, the obstruction of access to humanitarian assistance to populations in dire need and **expresses** its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and the respective Governments;

11. **Reiterates its call** for an unconditional and immediate ceasefire by all armed groups and surrender of weapons to the Government of the DRC; **calls upon** all armed groups to engage in the implementation of orderly disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), as a crucial element for stabilizing the Eastern DRC and the region;

12. **Condemns in the strongest terms** the continued illicit exploitation and trade of mineral resources, which denies the country and its citizens from deriving economic benefits;

13. **Requests** the AU Commission to undertake the following expeditiously:

- i. Facilitate consultations amongst all the stakeholders, including the EAC, ECCAS, ICGLR and SADC, to agree on a joint framework and modalities for effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the harmonized and coordinated efforts;
- ii. Establish a Strategic Support Cell within the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) to support the EAC Regional Force and its military operations in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo;
- iii. Improve the capacity level for the AU Liaison Offices in the DRC and Great Lakes Region within available resources to enable them to carry out their mandates efficiently and effectively, and relatedly to ensure that the African Union has a more visible and permanent presence in Eastern DRC;
- iv. Explore and mobilize predictable, flexible and sustainable funding through existing mechanisms to ensure efficient and effective implementation of the peace process in the DRC, including the possible use of the AU Peace Fund;
- v. Conduct a systemic study interrogating all the decisions of the Council on the DRC and the region to identify recurring issues and root causes of the insecurity in the country in order to create conditions to better understand the situation and guide further interventions;
- vi. Fully utilize the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism, the Joint Intelligence Fusion Centre and the Contact and Coordination Group and its Operational Cell under the Regional Oversight Mechanism. These innovative mechanisms are intended to build trust and confidence and help in the elimination of the threat posed by negative forces; and
- vii. Provide regular briefings to the Council on the progress of consolidated peace efforts in the DRC and the region;

14. **Recalls** Assembly Resolution [[Assembly/au/Res.I \(XXXV\)](#)] on the Impact of Sanctions and Unilateral Coercive Measures on African Union Member States, adopted by the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, in February 2022; and **calls** for the lifting of the arms embargo imposed on the DRC, in order to enable the country to effectively discharge its constitutional mandate of defending and protecting the national sovereignty and its citizens; in this regard, **appeals** to the African Members (A3) in the UN Security Council, to support the request of the DRC on the lifting of arms embargo;

15. **Reiterates** its decision to undertake a field mission to the DRC and the region, as soon as practicable; and

16. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.